

# Restaurants in the Oakland Area

Downtown  
Chinatown  
Broadway  
Old Oakland  
Jack London Sq.  
Further Away

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**Introduction**

0

This is the Oakland section of Restaurants in the Berkeley Area. It concentrates on restaurants near the downtown region, with some listings further away. It has been on the Web (<http://www-RNC.lbl.gov/RestOak/>) since mid 2003. The authors alone are responsible for the information provided and the opinions expressed.

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1

# Downtown

**Verbena**

2

1111 Broadway at 11th
465-9300

Hidden away in the back lobby of a high rise office building close to Oakland's City Center is this delightful sophisticated place, which is well worth seeking out. Warm atmosphere, tables nicely spaced, a lovely bar, there's a beautiful patio, too. The food is California eclectic, nicely done, prices moderately high but worth it. Popular at lunch, it is very quiet at dinner. Not open on weekends, but give it a try, and you won't regret it!

**City Center Mall**

3

13th St. btw. Broadway and Clay

This small pleasant mall has a wealth of informal cafes offering quick breakfasts and decent lunches. The foods range from bagels and espresso to pasta and burritos. Nothing is expensive, and on sunny days you can take advantage of a large number of outdoor tables and benches. At lunchtime, it becomes crowded with workers from the nearby office buildings. There are also a few shops, a bookstore, and easy access to BART.

**Saigon**

4

1526 San Pablo Ave.
465-4545

In Frank Ogawa Plaza (City Hall Plaza), 15th St. west of B'way is this simple place with excellent Vietnamese food. Very popular at lunchtime, when you can sit outside in the sunny plaza, the menu features huge soup bowls of pho, or refreshing cold vermicelli noodle salads called bun, topped with your choice of meat, veggies or delicious shrimp. There are generous daily luncheon specials, too. Prices are low, service friendly. At night it is quieter, and there are more menu choices, both Chinese and Vietnamese.

5

# Chinatown

**Oakland Chinatown**

6

7th to 12th Sts. btw. Franklin and Harrison

This is an area that is having a huge surge in growth, and is full of wonderful inexpensive restaurants and cafes: Chinese, Burmese, Vietnamese, Korean, etc. Go for a dim sum lunch some day, or just tour the neighborhood, exploring some of the side streets too, and try whatever place smells good and is crowded! You can also get something "to go", and munch as you walk. Most of the following places mentioned are extremely simple, but do not let that deter you.

**Binh Minh Quan**

7

338 12th St. btw. Harrison and Webster
893-8136

Extremely simple, this Vietnamese place is for those adventurous eaters who like to try something different. The menu (with English translations) is extensive, with authentic dishes not found elsewhere, and the prices are low. The lunch specials are a real bargain.

**Sushi Zone**

8

388 9th St., 10th btw. Webster and Franklin
893-9663

A serenely beautiful and modern oasis located on the second floor of the Pacific Renaissance Plaza, an Asian shopping mall, this place features wonderful sushi, as well as other Japanese favorites, some with a California French twist. The dishes are fairly priced, although some of the unusual sushi combinations can get expensive. At lunchtime, there are low priced featured specials. This is a place where you can enjoy a quiet meal.

**Peony**

9

388 9th St., 10th btw. Webster and Franklin
286-8866

Located on the second floor of the Pacific Renaissance Plaza, is this extremely large and popular Chinese restaurant, featuring excellent dim sum at lunch, and specializing in banquets at night. There is always a crowd waiting, the place is noisy and bustling, and the prices are high end for the cuisine. But, the food is good, and it is a fine choice for a large group.

**Joy Luck**

10

327 8th St. btw. Webster and Harrison

832-4270

Follow the local crowds always waiting at this Chinese restaurant, and you will find good food at low prices. No atmosphere, tables crowded together, noisy, everyone feasts on a large choice of fresh seafood dishes, along with more typical menu items. Service is quick, if impersonal.

**Legendary Palace**

11

708 Franklin St.

663-9188

This fairly new place is more upscale than most others in the area, both in decoration and prices. It features Hong Kong style dim sum and seafood. The shrimp are supposed to be especially good. This translates into higher prices, more solicitous service, and very fresh fish. The other choices are less distinctive. Only you can decide whether the decoration and food warrant the cost.

**Vi's**

12

724 Webster St.

835-8375

This is a simple inexpensive place that features Vietnamese cuisine, rice plates, vermicelli salads, and very good pho. It is one of the first Vietnamese restaurants that opened in this area, and was hugely popular. Now that there are other choices, it is not as crowded, and worth a try. Closed on Thursdays.

**Tin's Tea House**

13

701 Webster St.

832-7661

Crowded, noisy, popular with families, and extremely informal, this place features excellent Chinese cuisine at really low prices. The menu is extensive and interesting. Portions are large, and there's very good dim sum at lunch also. The tables are close together, service is efficient and quick, and everyone seems to order huge quantities of food. The waitpersons automatically package up the leftovers at the end of the meal for everyone to take home.

14

**Broadway****Battambang**

15

850 Broadway

839-8815

This is a small informal restaurant that features Cambodian cuisine, with many unusual menu items, all moderately low in price. The atmosphere is quiet, service is friendly, and tables nicely spaced so that you can have a quiet conversation. It is worth a try for something different, and is usually not too crowded.

**La Furia Chalaca**

16

310 Broadway

451-4206

A small restaurant that features Peruvian cooking at very moderate prices. The atmosphere is pleasantly quiet and comfortable, the tables nicely decorated with white cloths and flowers. The service is informal but friendly. The food has some unusual dishes featuring potatoes in numerous guises, as well as more typical meat and seafood choices. The sangria is much too expensive, but there is wine and beer.

**Soizic**

17

300 Broadway on 3rd St.

251-8100

A wonderful restaurant near Jack London Square, featuring fresh Californian-Asian cuisine at moderately high prices. This is definitely the best restaurant in the area. The cooking here is of high caliber, flavorful, with lovely presentation. Wines are somewhat high priced, atmosphere eclectically simple and quiet. This is a popular place, both at lunch and dinner, so reservations are recommended. There is a private room for groups.

**Oakland Grill**

18

301 Franklin St.

835-1176

An extremely informal and funky place, good for generous breakfasts and lunches. Open for dinner too. Don't expect high end gourmet cooking, but the food is good and the prices moderate. Located in the middle of the wholesale produce district, it's worth a try for something different.

**Everett and Jones**

19

126 Broadway

663-2350

Very popular, always crowded, generally noisy, this place features Barbecue in all its combinations. The service is friendly, the atmosphere extremely informal, and everyone seems to be having a great time. Open late on weekends, the portions are generous, the prices moderate.

## Old Oakland

20

### Pacific Coast Brewing

21

906 Washington St.

836-2739

Located in an historic building very close to the Convention center is this fine brewpub, offering a large menu of beers brewed on site, as well as "guest" draft beers. The menu has very moderately priced soups, salads, sandwiches, pizza, and a few hearty entrees as well. Open for both lunch and dinner, this is a good choice for an informal meal.

### Jessos

22

901 Washington St.

451-1561

Close to the Convention Center, at one corner of a food market is this place that specializes in mostly fried fish, Southern style. Everything comes with an order of hush puppies. There's fried chicken also, as well as grilled fish and gumbo, but look elsewhere for low calorie heart healthy food! Informal atmosphere, friendly service, low to moderate prices.

### Oaktown Cafe

23

499 9th St. at Washington

763-4999

Close to the Convention center, this place offers a bright, airy, and upscale setting for lunch, when it is very popular. The menu features good salads, pastas, and pizzas, with fresh and interesting ingredients. Prices are moderately high compared to Chinatown, but the atmosphere and service make it worthwhile. Much quieter at dinner, when a few heartier menu items are added.

### Cafe 817

24

817 Washington St.

271-7965

A lovely art filled place, close to the Convention Center, open only for breakfast and lunch. The menu choices are small, but everything is fresh and delicious. The Italian sandwiches are wonderful. The peaceful atmosphere is a plus when you want to get away from the crowds, read your paper and enjoy a delicious coffee.

### Toutatis

25

719 Washington St.

465-6984

Another fine possibility for breakfast or lunch, this small French creperie offers a quiet and friendly atmosphere. At lunch you will find both sweet and savory crepes, soups and salads. To drink, you may have authentic cidre, beer, or wine. This is also a good place for a light dinner.

### Le Cheval

26

1007 Clay St.

763-8957

A large, crowded, and very popular Vietnamese restaurant with a huge menu and moderate prices. Lunch is a real bargain, and the service speedy. This place can get really noisy when full, so beware. The cuisine features lots of meat dishes, but there are a number of vegetarian choices too. There is also a busy take-out counter. There is a validated parking lot around the corner. Be prepared to wait on weekend nights.

### Fat Lady

27

201 Washington St.

465-4996

Located in an historic building that was once a brothel, this restaurant is decorated in an elaborate Victorian style reminiscent of another era. The menu is elaborate and expensive, and it is the place to think of when you want something completely retro. In other words, do not expect California Fresh, Pan Asian, or Eclectic.

## Jack London Square

28

### Yoshi's

29

510 Embarcadero West

238-9200

Architecturally stunning, this restaurant facing Jack London Sq. features Japanese cuisine in a large quiet dining area with a sushi bar, and an acoustically superb performance space. The food is OK, but the real draw is the music late into the night, at what is now one of the top Jazz Clubs in the Bay Area. Prices are moderate to slightly expensive. This is not my favorite Japanese restaurant, but the music makes it special.

**Jack London Square****30**

Bottom of Broadway from Clay to Alice

At the bottom of Broadway, (watch out for the trains as you cross Embarcadero), facing the inner harbor, you will find Jack London Square, stretching a few blocks in either direction. There is a lovely walkway along the water. At one end you will find the First and Last Chance Saloon, which is a must-see, at the other end a ferry to San Francisco. Also there is a great Barnes and Noble Bookstore, many interesting shops, cafe's and restaurants.

**TGI Friday's****31**

bottom of Broadway

451-3834

Noisy, boisterous, and informal, this appeals to young people and families looking for standard American food: burgers and sandwiches, salads, ribs, fish and chips, etc. Nothing is too expensive. Also a popular place for weekday "happy hours". Service is quick and very friendly.

**Scott's****32**

bottom of B'way on the water

444-3456

A large and busy upscale seafood restaurant on the waterfront, featuring decent cooking, professional friendly service, and well spaced tables. Popular with large groups and families, get a table overlooking the water if you can. Prices are upscale, there's a huge menu, and the food is good if you stick to the simpler presentations. Reservations recommended, especially on weekends.

**Kincaid's****33**

One Franklin St. in Jack London Square

835-2032

This place is somewhat formal and dark, with wood interiors. It overlooks the water, so ask for a table with a view, if possible. The large moderately expensive menu features steaks and chops as well as seafood. This is a popular place for business lunches but is quieter at night and on weekends. Service efficient and professional.

**Pescatore****34**

near Franklin St. in Jack London Square

465-2188

An Italian restaurant that specializes in garlic infused pastas, as well as a choice of seafood. It is located on the water, so the tables with a view are preferred. The atmosphere is friendly and informal, the prices moderate.

**Hahn's Hibachi****35**

Embarcadero and Franklin

628-0717

This is a simple informal place featuring low priced Korean style barbecue, chicken, ribs and chops. There are also some Japanese dishes, such as udon and tempura. This is not the place for a fancy gourmet dinner, but it is tasty and quick.

**36****Further Away****Bay Wolf Café****37**

3853 Piedmont Ave.

655-6004

Converted Victorian house, warm and cozy. Elegant, expensive, inventive California menu and wonderful wines. If duck is on the menu, order it! Famous in the East Bay, rightfully so. Reservations required. Professional and knowledgeable service This is one of my favorite "fancy" restaurants in the East Bay. Open for lunch, too. The heated deck is available at all times, and allows for quieter dining.

**Jojo****38**

3859 Piedmont Ave.

985-3003

This is a small fine restaurant featuring superb, eclectic, sophisticated French cuisine, with a well chosen menu, lovely wines, and professional service. The menu changes according to the season, but the confit of duck leg is great. The desserts are especially good, too. The space is compact, but the friendliness of the service makes up for the crunch. Food prices moderately high, wine even more so. Here's another favorite to add to your list.

**Mezze****39**

3407 Lakeshore Ave. near Trestle Glen

663-2500

An open and airy restaurant that features Mediterranean cooking, offering a number of "small plates" as well as more substantial dishes. The prices are moderately high, the service warm and welcoming. When crowded, this place can get noisy, but it's a worthwhile place to try because of some of the unusual menu items.

<b>Trio Bistro</b>	<b>40</b>
542 Grand Ave.	663-2500
<p>A very small family run neighborhood bistro with a classic French menu. The frites are especially good, as are the desserts. Stick to the simple classics for your main course, and you will be very happy. Prices are moderately high, the service is warm and friendly. If it is crowded, the service can be slow, so be prepared, and don't go on a night when you have to get to a movie or a lecture!</p>	

<b>Dona Tomas</b>	<b>41</b>
5004 Telegraph Ave.	450-0522
<p>Take yourself to this out of the way location to discover an interesting menu of authentic Mexican food with a California flair. The restaurant consists of adjoining storefronts decorated with folk art. There is a large choice of cocktails to enhance your dining. The food is always tasty and different, the prices moderately high but worth it, the service professional and friendly. It's worth the trip!</p>	

<b>Marica</b>	<b>42</b>
5301 College Ave.	985-8388
<p>This is a fine place in Rockridge, brought to you by the chef of the late beloved Christopher's. The decor of this small storefront location is somewhat Art Moderne, with lovely lighting. The small menu is exclusively seafood, beautifully presented and prepared. There's a raw bar also, if you are an oyster fan. Prices are upscale and the wine is rather expensive, but it is definitely worth a try.</p>	

<b>Garibaldi's</b>	<b>43</b>
5356 College Ave.	595-4000
<p>A spacious beautifully designed restaurant, with elegant and sophisticated decor, and a Mediterranean menu. Open for lunch and dinner, the food is delicious, portions generous, service friendly. Prices are a bit high, but they offer a less expensive prix fixe menu Monday-Wednesday. There is a full bar, as well as a large wine list, with somewhat high prices. This is a good place for a festive dinner when you want to celebrate with a crowd.</p>	

<b>Uzen</b>	<b>44</b>
5415 College Ave.	654-7753
<p>In a small storefront in the Rockridge area you will find this spare, high ceilinged, eclectically decorated Japanese restaurant. The small menu features distinctive sushi, along with noodle and rice dishes. The sushi is fresh and excellent, but the choice is often small. Lunchtime prices are very moderate, but dinner can get pricey. There's a large selection of sakes along with the Japanese beers. This place can get quite crowded on weekend nights.</p>	

<b>Soi4</b>	<b>45</b>
5421 College Ave.	655-0889
<p>A very upscale Thai restaurant in Rockridge, located in a serene architecturally beautiful space. There is a full bar, with a large choice of cocktails. The service is solicitous, and the food has all of the standards, along with some unique dishes, too. The tables are nicely spaced, perfect for intimate conversation. The owners are gearing this towards a glamorous crowd. However, all of this comes with high end prices, to my mind not yet warranted.</p>	

<b>A Coté</b>	<b>46</b>
5478 College Ave. next to Citron	655-6469
<p>An instantly popular place brought to you by the owners of Citron. The storefront space has been transformed into a plush, dimly lit, intimate cafe featuring French bistro inspired "small plates", along with a large selection of wines and cocktails. Prices are high, especially for the wine, but this does not deter the crowds. The food can be great or merely good, depending on what you order. Open late - go at an off hour to snag a table.</p>	

<b>Citron</b>	<b>47</b>
5484 College Ave.	653-5484
<p>This lovely place features inventive bistro food with an elegant touch. It is very popular, and one of my favorites. The small, well chosen menu changes with the seasons, but everything is quite wonderful. Prices are expensive, but worth it if you order carefully. Reservations are essential. There is a beautiful back patio for outdoor dining, when weather permits. This should be on your list for "something special".</p>	

<b>Authors</b>	<b>48</b>
<p><a href="http://www-RNC.lbl.gov/Restaurants/">http://www-RNC.lbl.gov/Restaurants/</a></p>	
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